



SC Department of Employment and Workforce

## NEWS RELEASE

### Media Contact:

Heather Bianca

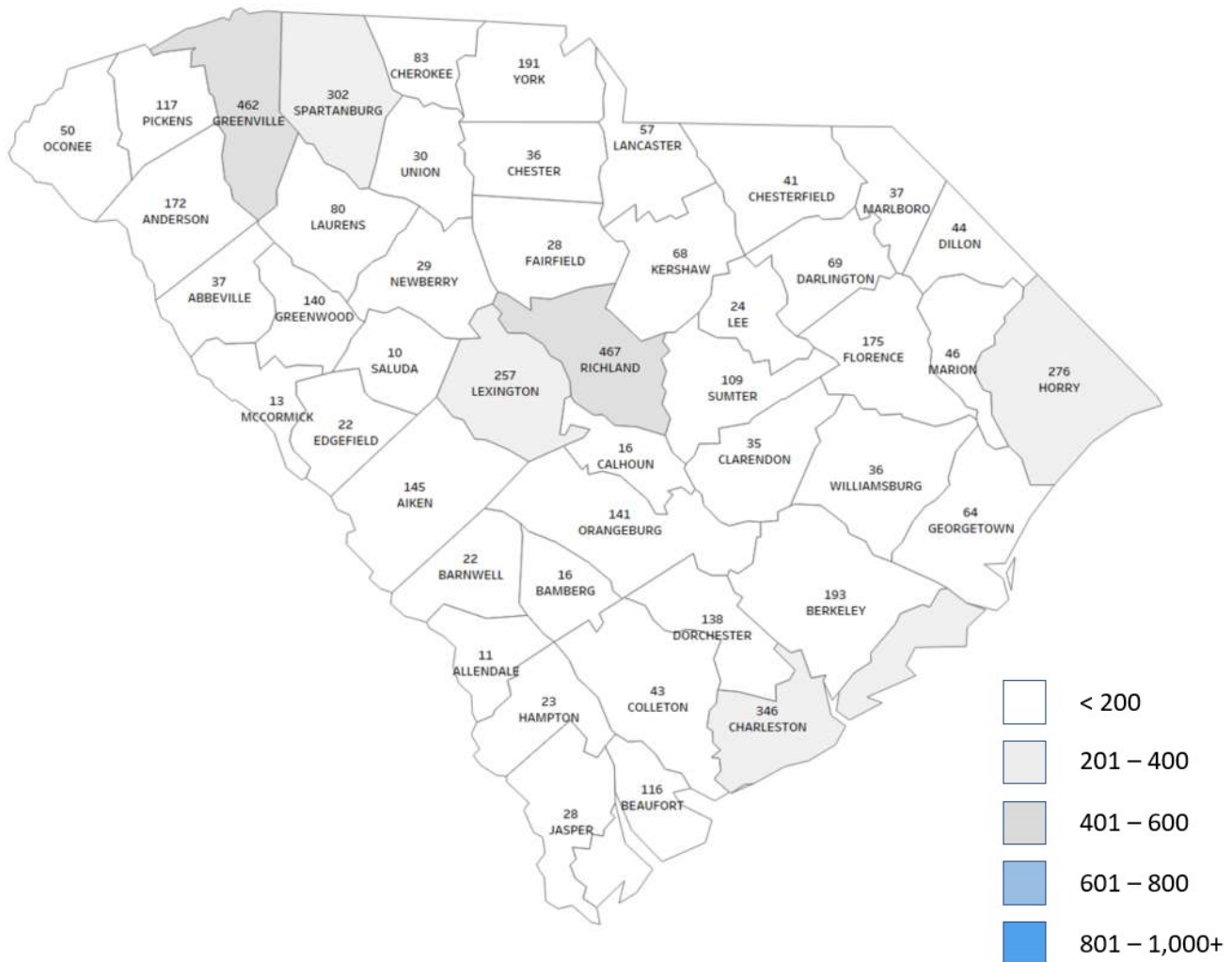
#### For Immediate Release

8:35 a.m. September 3, 2020

### South Carolina Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims Data Week Ending August 29, 2020

**Initial Claims:** For claim week ending August 29, 2020, the number of South Carolinians who filed their initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits is 5,019, a **decrease** of 505 initial claims from the week prior. This brings the initial claims total to 730,247 received since mid-March.

#### County Map (Intrastate)





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“We have reached a new low in weekly initial claims filed since the pandemic began in mid-March. As the numbers continue to decline, it’s logically expected that the downward trend week-over-week will become less significant as the economy continues to improve,” states executive director, Dan Ellzey.

“Of course, until South Carolina completes a full economic recovery, our staff will remain committed to those we serve. From processing and paying out critical unemployment insurance benefits, to initiating new ways to provide jobseekers services (virtually, in a drive-thru setting and in-person), to identifying Lifeboat Jobs to help job seekers find financial stability, our mission remains the same as day one,” continued Ellzey.

“Now that South Carolina has been approved by FEMA for the Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program, we are diligently working with our vendor to make the necessary changes to the MyBenefits portal. LWA will provide an additional \$300 for claimants eligible to receive at least \$100 in state or federal unemployment benefits. Information about eligibility and requirements will be updated over the next two to three weeks as the program is implemented into the agency’s system,” concludes Ellzey.

**Payout Data:**

From March 15, 2020 to September 3, 2020, the agency has paid more than \$3.91 billion total, including:

- a. Regular **state UI** benefits,
- b. **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance** (for the self-employed and others),
- c. the **Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation** (\$600 per week) program,
- d. the **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation** (extension of benefits for 13 weeks) program
- e. **Extended Benefits** (Additional 16 weeks of benefits after PEUC)

Call center hours (1-866-831-1724)

**Closed Saturday, Sept. 5 and Monday, Sept. 7 in observance of Labor Day**

Tuesday, Sept 8: 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Wednesday - Friday 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

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***About the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce***

*The S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce is putting South Carolinians to work. The agency has four missions: (1) workforce development; (2) free job match employment services; (3) unemployment insurance; and (4) labor market information. All four missions contribute to workforce development. The agency is dedicated to advancing South Carolina through services and programs that meet the needs of our businesses, jobseekers and those looking to advance their careers.*

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*\*An initial claim is a claim filed by an unemployed individual after a separation from an employer. The claimant requests a determination of basic eligibility for the UI program. When an initial claim is filed with a state, certain programmatic activities take place and these result in activity counts including the count of initial claims. The count of U.S. initial claims for unemployment insurance is a leading economic indicator because it is an indication of emerging labor market conditions in the country. However, these are weekly administrative data which are difficult to seasonally adjust, making the series subject to some volatility.*

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